

Lazaretto
On the Delaware River at Essington, PA



Lazaretto Grounds – view from the River

The Lazaretto was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on March 16, 1972. The Lazaretto is recognized as one of Tinicum Township's oldest landmarks, dating from about 1800, and potentially as an historic resource of national significance. The site qualified for National Historic Landmark status during the 1930s; however, the owner at that time rejected the idea of designating the property. It is a unique surviving example of a quarantine station for immigrants bound for Philadelphia, in use for approximately 100 years. In addition, the site functioned as a seaplane base for almost 100

years, pre-dating World War I, and has the potential for yielding archeological data associated with the "Printzhof." The latter is the site of the first European government in Pennsylvania, where Governor Printz established the New Sweden Colony in 1643.



Current Condition – view from inland

The Lazaretto and its complex of buildings was constructed as a result of people's fear of the Yellow Fever, which was rampant in Philadelphia during the end of the eighteenth century. The original Lazaretto stood behind old Fort Mifflin but was relocated to 10 acres of land on Tinicum Island in 1799. Completed in 1800, the Lazaretto served as a quarantine station until 1893 when the station was relocated to Marcus Hook. At this time, the Tinicum Island Lazaretto became a popular picnic ground for Philadelphia politicians, city employees and councilmen. At the turn of the century the city leased the Lazaretto to the Orchard Club, a private

club, and the area became a lavish pleasure resort. In 1915, it was transformed into the Philadelphia Seaplane Base, and was temporarily used as a US Army aviation-training base at the outbreak of World War I. Presently, the three-story Georgian administration building, the barn/stable, and the guard house at the river's edge are in danger of demolition by the current owner to make way for a riverside parking lot. The physician's house is located on the property of the Riverside Yacht Club and is not in danger of demolition. The buildings are on private property and not open to the public.

Governor Printz State Park
2nd St. & Wanamaker Ave., Essington, PA
610-583-7221
www.biderman.net/parks.htm

Governor Printz Park encompasses approximately seven acres on what was once known as "Great Tinicum Island" along the Delaware River. It commemorates one of the earliest European settlements in the New World. In 1643 the new governor of New Sweden, Johan Printz, moved his capital from Fort Christina (located in what is now Wilmington, Delaware) to Tinicum Island. At this time Fort Gothenburg was established in addition to Printz's dwelling and headquarters. Two years later a fire swept over the newly established settlement. The "Printzhof," the governor's home and headquarters, was reconstructed more solidly and lavishly. This two-story log structure contained lumber sent from Sweden, glass windows and lavish draperies. In 1653 Governor Printz gave up his command and returned to Sweden. In 1655 Peter Stuyvesant, governor of New Netherland, conquered Printz's successor and gained control of the Swedish colony.

The Printzhof is no longer standing. Instead, it is commemorated as an archeological site. Part or all of the Printzhof and Fort Gothenburg may actually have been located on the Lazaretto property. In addition, the first Swedish Lutheran church was founded in this area in the 1640s. The prestigious John Campanius Holm Award, given by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to 25 people each year for achievements in the field of meteorology, is named after an early pastor of this church. He took the first daily weather readings in Pennsylvania.

After extensive archeological excavation and landscaping, artifacts from the area now known as Governor Printz Park were removed to the nearby American Swedish Historical Museum, in Franklin Delano Roosevelt Park, for public display. There are self-guided tours available for visitors to roam the grounds of what may have been the first European government in Pennsylvania.

See the Recreational Sites Section for additional information on recreational opportunities available at the site.

Morton Homestead State Park
100 Lincoln Ave., Prospect Park, PA
610-583-7221

The Morton Homestead in Prospect Park Borough is significant for its architecture as a surviving link to the first Swedish settlement and for its association with the politically prominent Morton family of colonial times. Morton Mortonson constructed the Morton Homestead in several stages starting in about 1654.

Morton Mortonson was the great grandfather of John Morton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and he originally owned all of what is now Norwood, south of Chester Pike, a total of about 700 acres. Some type of "blockhouse" or some other type of structure partially below ground was constructed upon the banks of the Darby Creek in the Borough of Prospect Park; however, this earlier structure was likely demolished after 1666. Later in 1698, a one-story log cabin was constructed for Morton's son Mathias and his family, and in the mid-1700s a second structure was built. At this time, the two buildings served as the Darby Creek Ferry



Present Exterior View

House; the ferry across Darby Creek was located nearby. In the late 1790s these cabins were connected by stone walls and re-roofed, forming a second story. Morton Mortonson's property remained within the family for quite some time. Owned by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the exterior of the cabin has been restored and the interior has been furnished with period furniture. In 1970, the state nominated the building for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The cabin is located one mile north of Governor Printz Park and is open to the public for

guided tours. It is presently surrounded by three acres of parkland which includes a picnic area.



Morton Homestead Picnic Grounds

See the Recreational Sites Section for additional information on recreational opportunities available at the site.

Morton Morton House 515 ½ Winona Avenue, Norwood, PA

Morton Morton of Ridley, grandson of Morton Mortonson, constructed this two story brick house probably sometime between 1720 and 1760 on the property near Darby and Muckinipates creeks about a mile north of what was once known as "Great Tinicum Island." In 1654 Morton Mortonson, Sr. owned this land, which was included as part of New Sweden, the first European settlement in Pennsylvania. Lydia Boon, the granddaughter of Morton Morton, inherited some 300 acres of her grandfather's land. It is this piece of acreage on which the existing house stands. The house was passed on to family members until the mid to late nineteenth century.

In 1840 the wing, which was originally constructed for Morton Morton's mother-in-law, was rebuilt and a third floor added. Owned by Norwood Borough since 1954, the borough restored the Morton Morton house to its original construction in 1969. At the time of the restoration, only the chimney and partial foundation of the wing remained standing, while the main portion of the building was severely dilapidated. During the renovations, the third floor was removed, the exterior and interior of the main building were painstakingly rehabilitated, and the wing was completely reconstructed, with the existing fireplace and chimney incorporated into the new structure. Recently added to the National Register of Historic Places, the Morton Morton house is the oldest surviving building in Norwood Borough and one of the oldest buildings in Delaware County. The building is temporarily closed to the public while undergoing additional renovations.